

# town of wellesley

## COMPREHENSIVE PLAN NEWS BULLETIN

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### PUBLIC MEETINGS FOCUS ON GOALS AND PRIORITIES

Nearly 170 members of the Wellesley community participated in at least one of the five public meetings organized by the Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee in October. The meetings included a Saturday morning workshop for all town residents, three weekday evening workshops aimed at residents of three sets of specific precincts, and an early morning meeting for representatives of the business and educational community.

The purpose of the meetings was to identify the goals and priorities that Wellesley should focus on in the next ten years. Maps were displayed and fact sheets were distributed and the comprehensive plan consultants gave a brief presentation explaining trends since Wellesley's last comprehensive plan in 1994. In addition, participants in the precinct meetings and the business meeting discussed issues of particular interest to their areas.

With the 1994 planning goals as a basis for discussion, participants divided into small groups to discuss which goals should be retained, modified, or eliminated and which goals should be added. The results of the small group discussions were summarized on poster-sized sheets. Earlier comprehensive plans included numerous goals without identifying clear priorities, but the Steering Committee wants the updated plan to be more strategic. For this reason, participants in the workshop were each given three "votes" (in the form of adhesive dots) to affix in any combination to the poster listing potential goals.

### Priority Issues for Residents

Participants focused on three priority issues:

- Preserving residential and neighborhood character
- Preserving retail and service businesses that serve the daily needs of residents, as well as small-scale, independent businesses
- Improving circulation and transportation within town, for pedestrians and bicycles as well as for cars

**Preservation of neighborhood character**, especially better methods of discouraging the impacts of "mansionization," captured a majority of the votes from residents.

Providing somewhat more diversity in housing types, particularly for senior citizens, was the second most important housing priority.

**Improvement of transportation and circulation** in general attracted a lot of attention, but participant concerns were spread over a large number of issues, ranging from improving traffic enforcement to promoting alternatives to car travel within town.

Similarly, **preservation of natural resources, open space and recreation** was very important in the aggregate, but there was no one issue within that category that focused the majority of attention. Issues in this category ranged from preserving Moses Pond as a swimming pond to promoting best environmental practices in management of private landscapes.

In the area of **economic development**, fully three out of every four votes reflected participants' strong desire to see the Town's commercial districts retain independent stores as well as the kind of retail and services that serve the community's everyday needs.

### Business Workshop

The **business-institutional workshop** had a small attendance. Participants were generally positive about the relationship between the Town and owners of businesses and nonresidential property but they felt that communication could still be improved with more systematic efforts

### DRAFT GOALS FOR THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE

#### Land Use

- Strengthen Town zoning regulations and design guidelines, and their enforcement, to ensure continuity of Town character and quality of life.
- Improve the appearance of Town gateways.

#### Natural and Cultural Resources

- Restore, preserve, and enhance open space and sensitive natural resources for habitat protection and enrichment of community character.

#### Open Space and Recreation

- Ensure continuation of Wellesley's recreational facilities as major community assets.

#### Housing

- Maintain the primarily single-family character of Wellesley's housing stock.

- Maintain the physical form of Wellesley's residential neighborhoods to balance community standards with individual interests.
- Promote the creation of housing units other than single-family homes to provide housing options for people across a range of income, age, family size, and needs while complementing town character.
- Promote the creation of a moderate number of housing units permanently affordable to households with incomes at 80% or below the area median income.

### Economic Development

- Retain a diverse array of independent businesses.
- Create a system of regular communication among Town government, the business community, and local institutions.

### Transportation and Circulation

- Manage traffic to enhance traffic flow on Washington Street and other high-traffic roads.
- Create intra-Town routes as alternatives to vehicular traffic.
- Manage parking plan to support commercial districts.
- Seek improvement of traffic flow on regional routes.

### Community Services and Facilities

- Maintain school quality.
- Create a ten-year plan to fix schools and other public buildings and to allow for flexible uses.

### NEXT STEPS

Phase One of the Comprehensive Plan Update focuses on housing, economic development, and land use. The Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee is working on recommendations for housing and neighborhood character and will be focusing next on economic development.

Draft chapters will be posted on the Comprehensive Plan web page. A public meeting to discuss the housing and economic development recommendations will be scheduled for late January.

#### WELLESLEY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN 2004-2005 UPDATE STEERING COMMITTEE:

##### Planning Board Members

Thomas Frisardi	James C. Meade	Edward Chazen
Rose Mary Donahue	Sue Wright	Frank DeMasi

##### Town Meeting Representatives

Gerald C. Hume, Precinct A	Henry Lysaght, Precinct E
Richard McGhee, Precinct B	Barbara McMahon, Precinct F
Jacqueline Hatch, Precinct C	Judith Hull, Precinct G
Joellen Toussaint, Precinct D	

Rick Brown, Wellesley Planning Director  
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Information and documents related to the Comp Plan Update are posted on: [www.ci.wellesley.ma.us](http://www.ci.wellesley.ma.us)  
—look for the Comprehensive Plan button.

